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ABSTRACT

Although it is important to formulate a set of generalizations stressing form rather than specific content, the study discussed here demonstrates that analytical insights are omitted if historically specific differences are not examined as well as structurally inherent similarities. Thus this paper focuses on the utility of indicating the historical processes which, following the genesis of two cities, produced differing milieus for an influx of some 20,000 Portuguese immigrants (divided almost equally between the two communities) during the past 10 years. The cities are separated in their town limits by some 20 miles, but they are actually linked by a series of interdigital suburbs and small towns. They exist in a coastal area of southern New England and have very different economic bases. Each, for historical reasons, has created a different stereotype, or ethnic identity, of Portuguese-Americans, has established different positions within the total network of the community for the Portuguese-American to occupy, has provided different strategic alternatives for the immigrant who must adapt to his new life, and thus has created areas which the Portuguese immigrants themselves perceive as different--a perception that influences their choice of settlement. (Author/JM)

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A tale of two cities: The reality of historical differences.

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At a recent International Congress of Anthropologists the participants in a symposium on 'Migration and ethnicity' appeared to reach a consensus on the point that all cities represented the 'same' environment for migrants. Thus, they concluded, the real concerns of anthropologists were in the area of formulating a model which would delineate these structural similarities and which would, as a result, be generally applicable to the analysis of any migrant group, anywhere. This was based on the contention that the city, as context, posed specific problems of acaptation and integration which would be the same were an incivicual to find himself in Paris, Hong Kong, Lima, or Cedar Rapids.

That such an exploratory focus is legitimate--and can be productive--is not to be argued. Certainly there are such omnipresent aspects as the need to establish new ties, reaffirm (if possible) earlier connections, and, in general, establish the basis for satisfying one's cultural, social and psychological wants and needs. There are the difficulties encountered when the host society shifts from recruitment to exclusion when economic needs have been fulfilled and a saturation point has been reached. New occupational skills must be acquired; intra-familial differences due to differential orientation to old and new norms and values, must be resolved; and cognitive

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dissonance, encountered in moving from one communication system (and/or language) to another, must be resolved.

There are, however, certain dangers ~~in~~ involved in focusing on the structural similarities. Aside from the problem that some would take an overly-simplistic position and argue that such an emphasis is the only consideration, there is the more crucial heuristic factor that one cannot, from this perspective alone, predict the differing degree of success or failure, in specific locales, for individuals or groups from one cultural milieu as compared to another. That such an integrative differential does exist cannot be disputed: German Jews and Yemenite Jews moving to Israel do not encounter the same problems of adjustment; A Sicilian peasant and a Scottish farm worker do not get the same employment possibilities upon arrival in Toronto; and studies of various American Indian tribes show there are apparent, varying degrees of difficulty that mark the urban adjustment of one tribe ~~in relation~~ relative to another (cf., Martin 1964: 290-5).

In short, while I accept the point that it is important to formulate a set of generalizations stressing form rather than specific content, I hope to demonstrate in the following study that analytical insights (and ones which would be especially relevant in applied anthropology) are omitted if we do not look at historically specific differences as well as structurally inherent similarities.

Like a coin which has been stamped on only one side, we will, I fear, find ourselves able to buy little, if anything, with a unidimensional model.

It is to redress the imbalance that I choose, in this paper, to demonstrate the utility of indicating the historical processes which, following the genesis of two cities, produced differing milieus for an influx of some 20,000 Portuguese immigrants (divided almost equally between the two communities) during the past 10 years. The cities (called here Perryport and Texton) are separated in their town limits by some 20 miles but they are actually linked by a series of interdigital suburbs and small towns. They exist in a coastal area of southern New England and, though occupying similar eco-niches have, for reasons to be explained, very different economic bases. Each, for historical reasons, has created a different stereotype, or ethnic identity, of Portuguese-Americans, has established different positions within the total network of the community for the Portuguese-American to occupy, has provided different strategic alternatives for the immigrant who must acapt to his new life, and thus has created arenas which the Portuguese immigrants themselves perceive as different--a perception that influences his choice of settlement.

Perryport. Like Texton, Perryport has about 100,000 people and, like its sister community, is located with

easy access to the sea. The town was first settled in 1640 and because of its maritime focus prospered even through the days of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 when seafaring activities were even more precarious an occupational focus than usual. Perryport was a leader in the American whaling industry and this thriving focus dominated the entire town. There were myriad other industries connected with the maritime focus and one was either at sea--or connected with an industry which made seafaring possible. The city's prosperity rivalled that of New York, Boston or Charleston.

The businessmen and ships' captains (and the two were not mutually exclusive) soon found that it was very lucrative to leave port with a skeleton crew, sail east from New England to the mid-North Atlantic and round out their crews with Azorean seamen. The men of the islands were hearty workers and the poverty of their overcrowded and remote islands--outstanding even by European standards--was such that they could be hired for far less than the wages which American seamen demanded. There was also far less complaining of the appalling conditions aboard ship and the dangers of the occupation.

Thus, the Portuguese men--and later their families--began drifting gradually into Perryport. The process continued into the 19th century and, by 1830, the Portuguese were in the town in sufficient number that a certain area was marked as, 'the Portygee part of town.' The townspeople

seemed to welcome them and various newspaper accounts of the time speak well of this or that person's new business or continuing business success. Terms such as 'industrious,' 'prosperous,' and 'energetic' were common descriptive elements in the news. Today's townspeople still tend to characterize the Portuguese as hardworking, cheerful and thrifty. For the inhabitants of early Perryport the Portuguese seemed to be well-suited to the town's life-style. They seemed ready to acculturate and embodied the traditional New England virtues by being industrious, penny-wise and aware that 'good fences make good neighbors.' The old adage that 'nothing succeeds like success' was the keystone for their acceptance and a place in the community. They succeeded so well that by the 1850s some were masters of their own ships, successful entrepreneurs, and well-to-do landholders.

The decline of whaling began in the late 19th century, forcing Perryport to look to other economic bases. She began to diversify to various small industry and, as well, turned to textile manufacturing. Her future economic strength was to lie in the multiplicity of her economic bases and though parts of New England suffered drastically when the textile mills began to shift south, Perryport maintained at least a modicum of prosperity.

The steady stream of Portuguese immigrants which, beginning in earnest about 1870, had peaked for the United States as a whole around the turn of the

century (1911-20=89,732 arrivals in American ports, 1431-40=3,329 arrivals in American ports, Adler 1972:17) declined primarily due to the Immigration Act of 1924 (43 Stat. 153) which reduced the Portuguese allotment to 503, a figure which was further diminished by a Presidential Proclamation (No. 1872, 46 Stat. 2982) to a total of 440 immigrants (Adler 1972:17). Where the single state of Massachusetts received 9,002 immigrants in 1913 alone, the entire country received only a little over 3000 during the decade 1931-40, and Massachusetts' total of this was only 202 (Adler 1972:17).

The changing situation of today is signalled by a revision of the immigration regulations (Immigration Act of 1965, 75 Stat. 911). Portuguese immigration for the country as a whole jumped from 19,588 for the decade 1951-60, to 76,064 for the period 1961-70--with the vast majority (61,756) arriving during the years 1966-1970.

Perryport and Texton received an overwhelming majority of this second wave. The immigrants went in almost equal numbers to each of the cities but the reception accorded the 'Greenies' (as the Portuguese immigrants are commonly called in this area--though the early arrivals use it as a pejorative term) was quite different, one community to the another.

In Perryport, with an economic picture which favorably matched the natural average, and where the Portuguese, generally, were looked upon as welcome additions, the

major problems were housing, learning the language, and adjusting to life in a strange city. Some of the older Northern resented what they considered to be the 'pushy ways' of their newly-arrived brethren. Something of the attitude, "I went through hard times to settle in and so should they" seemed to underlie their resentment. But this was not too common and most informants seem more inclined to echo the words of one elderly man who told me, "We worked hard and paid hard for everything we got. These new people seem to think they've got better than that coming. I guess we came at the wrong time--but it was us who made it easy for them, I think."

The greatest difficulty for many of the new immigrants was the realization that, due to the presence of the so-called Black Portuguese (Africans used by the Portuguese to settle the Cape Verde Islands), many in the community considered the Portuguese to be at least partly Black--a racial tag which they soon found out carried a certain stigmas. As one Yankee woman told me: "I remember dating a blond, blue-eyed boy. But he had a Portuguese name and my family worried that maybe he had Negro blood. People worried that maybe a baby would be born mulatto because of that. And how could you tell?" This had been an aspect of Perryport life which had been kept far below an overt level. The conflict inherent in the situation only surfaced in the school setting. People accepted the Portuguese, looked favorably on them, but, in those classic words, 'they wouldn't want their daughter to

marry one.' Many of the Portuguese of earlier times, becoming aware of this, acquired the same prejudice and, in order to avoid being tagged as 'probably one of _them_' not only did not argue against the situation of racism _per se_, but separated themselves from the Bravos or CeeVees as they are variously called and, except for including them in the _festa_ (religious holiday festivals) activities, effectively ignored them.

The new Portuguese immigrants, however, had various reasons for not wishing to accept this strategy. The African colonial wars, their own feelings of dismay at suddenly finding themselves a notch lower in the social ladder than they had expected to be, and several far more complex factors, all combined to make the the arrivals especially defensive concerning the position in Perryport. They adopted several strategies: The Black Cape Verdeans became the scapegoats and racial disorders grew intense in the areas where the two groups of Portuguese intermingled. This scapegoat tactic seems to have been based on the approach of "Don't tag us with them. We don't get along with them either!" Full scale violence finally erupted on such a scale that the townspeople--Portuguese and non-Portuguese--were frightened into taking steps to resolve some of the underlying issues, chief of which was the long-standing discrimination practiced against the Cape Verdeans, especially in the economic sphere.

A second strategy, and one which intensified following the racial strife, was to form political action groups and immigrant assistance programs. There had always been associations for the new arrivals to join but they were chiefly social clubs where men congregated regularly for a game of cards and some drinks. Over 30 marching bands, the Church, and numerous festas provided the means for young people, women and the group as a whole to cement their ties. The Portuguese were not--and are not now--a viable political force. Ethnic pressure groups, formed to achieve goals specific to the group as an ethnic block, are very new to Perryport. Until the last decade few Portuguese entered politics. The essential associational nexuses were clubs and churches, linked by the mechanism of festas.

The second half of the 20th century has a different climate of opinion. Simultaneous with a new attitude towards the melting pot concept came a new type of Portuguese migrant. As Americans began to argue that racism was evil but ethnicity was good, immigrants who arrived lacked the 'huddled-masses-yearning-to-be-free' attitude of their predecessors. They were more politically sophisticated and saw that community groups, working to solve community problems, were the best means to achieve personal goals, inhibited because of social barriers. The associations and the cross-cutting occupational linkages maintained in this city of small, diversified businesses offered a ready-made foundation for such action groups and their aspirations. Further, the structure of the town

itself ~~was~~ open enough that such groups had a way of implementing their goals. Old arrivals and newcomers could join, urge a sound program of English language instruction for Portuguese children thrust into the schools, and be relatively assured of getting a hearing and seeing something done.

A third strategy was to do what the Portuguese had traditionally done: acculturate as quickly as possible. Many avoided the racial issue, and ignored the possibility of joining an action group. They learned the language, worked hard, bought houses and repaired them, rented them out to still newer arrivals and moved into the suburbs.

To summarize the Perryport situation: Gradual immigration under generally favorable economic conditions led to positive attitudestowards the Portuguese as an ethnic group within the social structure of the town. Newcomers who did not wish to occupy the politically powerless position traditionally held, who resented the demands to Americanize except for elements which the non-Portuguese were willing to allow them to retain, and who did not accept the goals and aspirations inherent in the stereotypic identity shaped by earlier circumstances, were able to use the relatively open Perryport system and the accepted patterns of associational links to form new types of associations which would affect the system.

Texton. It was not until 1870 that the small town of Texton, first settled in 1659, began a period of rapid and explosive growth. From an 1840 population of a little over 6000 an increase over the next 30 years led to some 25,000 in 1870 which, in the next 30 years, leaped to 105,000. The reason for this rapid growth lies in the introduction of textile mills. In 1840 there were approximately 2000 people employed in the mills; by 1870 the figure had jumped to 14,000; by 1910 almost 30,000 worked in the textile factories.

Texton was an ideal site for such mills which ran primarily on steam power; a cheap source of energy was available in the nearby river and falls, and good transportation facilities allowed for the receipt of cotton from the south and shipment throughout the country and abroad of the finished product. Textile manufacturing was the life-blood of the town and, until the 1920s it accounted for some 30% of the town's economic base. The mills multiplied and so did the town's inhabitants. The cry was for cheap labor and, hopefully, one which would not fall prey to the labor agitators. Many immigrants came to the city--Irish, Scots, French-Canadians, southern Europeans--but by far the most desired were the Portuguese. As one report put it: "They are hard-working and docile, if handled properly." Many Portuguese were brought in on a basis something like that of indentured servitude. Factory representatives would go to the Islands,

offer what appeared to be astronomically high wages for an assurred job and a loan for the passage money. To the Portuguese poor who existed in what was essentially a cashless economy, the chance to come to America and make more money in a week than he saw all year at home, was inducement indeed! For the company recruiter, the more ignorant and naive such recruits were, the better for the company; it meant a longer period before they would be likely to be able to leave the mills. Even at a time when literacy was defined as the simple ability to write one's name, the Portuguese had the highest illiteracy rate of any European, African or Asian immigrant group to the United States--almost 70% (Smith, 1973:). Immigrants from other groups stayed a few years or even months and then quickly left to work at higher wages, in safer conditions, in environments less hazardous to their helath--but the Portuguese remained. "They are the most desired of workers," writes one industrialist of them.

And the economics of the situation were, to the Azorean, excellent. Here, the whole family could work; men, women, children, even the handicapped and the aged might find employment at a sweeping job or something of the kind. Given the family-based economic perspective of the Portuguese, the resultant income was a fortune. At a time when the average workingman in America brought home between $8-12 a week, his family income could multiply that figure by almost the total number of individuals within the household

(barring only children under 7). One informant told me that his father was one of 8 children, all of whom worked in the mills while still under the parental roof. "Our family made about $40-50 a week. That's like a thousand today. My grandfather had never seen that much cash in his whole life!"

But the Portuguese paid for this income. The children were, of course, given the minimal education possible and put to work in the mills for as long a work week as possible--whatever his age. And this perpetuated the group's position as the pool from which to draw the lowest-paid, 'unskilled' laborers. There are in Texton today, individuals who are the fifth generation to work in the mills, at essentially the same occupational level as their immigrant forefathers.

The Portuguese came in and stayed as the lowest strata of the community. Many of the non-Portuguese viewed them as uneducable--perhaps too biologically inferior on the whole to have the intelligence to do any but the most menial labor. (For some reason, not clear, few Bravos went to Texton. It may be that they simply were not on the recruitment list since the initial workers came from the Azores and Madeira for the most part. They, in turn, brought in kin and friends as the jobs were available, thus, possibly, keeping the Bravos out of the employment network--though not out of deliberate prejudice.)

Although not segregated into specific neighborhoods

the Portuguese workers lived near the factories in which they were employed. This created 'company neighborhoods', many of which were ethnically homogeneous. Such factors, together with the social clubs, bands, and churches which also existed in Texton, might have been expected to create integrative bonds but the occupational focus was the crucial difference. Textile mills were almost the exclusive employment possibility. Without competition from other manufacturing mill owners were in tacit agreement concerning working conditions, wages, hours, and employement practices. Labor conditions, then, were much more rigorous than in Perryport. There was, however, bitter competition between mills, a competition which grew as the economy worsened. Workers were often divided by this intense rivalry, partly because job 'loyalty' was one way to insure steady employment.

Too, workers tried to live near the mill at which they were employed. Seasonal unemployment and depressions would cause the worker to change jobs and thus his residence, adding to the urban rootlessness, and loose associational ties.

Mill technology did not encourage worker communication and the 60-hour work week left little capacity for recreation. Women and children were probably most debilitated by such conditions. The women, especially, had great difficulty since they had to work the same long hours but also had to keep house, bear and raise the children, and tend to the personal needs of the household members (which sometimes included 2 or 3 boarders). Work demands and traditional attitudes of Portuguese males concerning the freedom of women, restricted their life to the house, job, street block, and Church.

The minimal social life of the Portuguese, ethnically insular as it was, offered no more of an opportunity to learn English than did the isolated job in the nerve-wracking noise of the mills. Portuguese culture was, then, slow to leave the immigrant.

Another consequence of mill work was the compounding of traditional emphases on the nucleated aspect of a group whose significant social orientation is the primary family. No structural nexuses were created to circumvent the atomistic forces of traditional patterns and the mill work. The Portuguese while pro-union are not strong union. They tend to be suspicious of the men who lead the union (though not of the union per se) and several union officials and shop stewards complained to me of membership apathy ("If we didn't offer them charter flights to the Azores they probably wouldn't belong"). The Church, particularly at the formative period of which we speak, emphasized acceptance of life and maintenance of traditional patterns. Last, isolation in the factory and the piece work incentive system stressed competition rather than cooperation among workers.

The results of the atomistic social field can be gauged by the looseness of affiliation ties with the existing associations and by the fact that, despite the fact that the Portuguese of Texton represent between 30-40% of the total population, they have been able to elect only one ~~major~~ mayor who served but one term. And only 3% of the elected offices available to city residents to vote upon have been filled by a Portuguese.

The new immigrant wave brought the same type of immigrant to Texton as had been attracted to Perryport. The explicit stereotype, however, was much more negative and more distinctly pejorative than in Perryport. The newcomers were more resentful concerning the stereotype and the blocks it created to achieving their aspirations.

Non-Portuguese justify their pejorative stereotype by pointing to the declining economy and the declining population. The unemployment figure is one of the highest in the country and yet the Portuguese keep arriving "bringing more of the type of people we don't need." The Portuguese percentage of the population is increasing because many of the more occupationally mobile are leaving. This, argues the non-Portuguese, "leaves us with a bunch of unskilled workers that we can't train because they don't have enough basic education." This argument is some 50 years old by now.

The reason for the continuing influx can be found in the revised immigration laws. The Portuguese know of the employment difficulties yet the elimination of the quota system and establishment of the 'preferential category' law almost requires that they continue to come to a city with a large Portuguese population. The Immigration act of 1965 (75 Stat. 911), and especially the second and the fifth preferences forces the immigrant to go to the point of his sponsor. Admitted are spouses, unmarried children of resident aliens; a U.S. citizen's siblings, and sibling's spouse and children.

Though statistical data are lacking, estimates are that only some 60% of the new immigrants have stayed. For this group there are two dominant strategies; education and personalized manipulation of the system.

My own impressions and discussions with school officials indicate that the newcomer is more inclined to see education as a solution to some of his problems of adjustment. The newcomers are, of course, better educated than those immigrants of 75-100 years ago. He is more culturally conditioned by his own milieu to see education as a useful tool in making a living. The Portuguese school system has improved immensely over the last 50 years--particularly in relation to filling the needs of the poor. The newcomers are thus more ready to sacrifice immediate income for deferred wealth and/or status.

The second strategy was succinctly put by one informant when I asked him why the Portuguese of Texton didn't get together and try to improve the position of the group's members--"...the last to be hired and the first to be fired." He replied:

> How do you change it? We can't control the bosses. And the unions are for the bosses. And every Portuguese is for himself. You look around and you see we can't even cooperate to get a good <u>festa</u> going like they do over in Perryport. Over there they work together and it lasts the whole week end. It's a big thing with everybody working to help it make. Here, you start something and this group fights with that one, and won't work with another one, and this guy can't stand that one. We can't get cooperation for anything. It's every person

for himself. Why should anyone try to get people to work together when experience shows that after your back is broken to push the thing, someone along the line starts pushing his own thing and it all collapses. You learn pretty soon not to bother. I tried but I found out that the other guy was for himself and I was being the only one who wasn't getting himself taken care of. Now I look out for me and mine. That's the way things are here.

In Texton, then, there is much individual resentment of the social field in which the immigrant must operate but there is little if any coordinated group effort to alter the situation, particularly as it is affected by the negative stereotype which structures the communication process between newcomers and old timers, between Portuguese and non-Portuguese. In this city, the Portuguese came, en masse, and both then and now are a highly visible group because of their relationship to the economic structure of the community. They were of dubious value so long as they contributed to the financial well-being of Texton entrepreneurs. Now, however, the city has seen 50 years of decline--and the end is not yet in sight. They had worn out their welcome and not only didn't know enough to leave but were inviting others to come and stay.

The pervasive atomism which was touched upon earlier is a critical aspect of life in what one hesitantly calls

'the Portuguese community.' There are divisive forces imposed by the community and by the occupational structure--forces which are either lacking or much weaker in Perryport. One example of this can be found in the more explicit boundaries which mark one neighborhood off from another and which have rankings about which there is a high degree of agreement: "good class," "poor but respectable," "downhill," "a real slum."

The newcomer to Texton has moved into an entirely different environment--in terms of his own perception--from that of Perryport. He must, as an immigrant, adopt different strategies, and this differential process means that the perception of American life, and the resultant acculturative process (as well as ~~which of his~~ thus traditional values which are retained) will be different. This was explicitly recognized by every informant with whom I spoke in either city. When asked, "Do you think things would be just the same if you lived in (Perryport/Texton)?" I always received a negative answer--though the reasons for and nature of the differences varied in type, and ranged from highly positive to highly negative in the evaluation of the alternative.

In sum, Perryport and Texton present differing social fields for the Portuguese immigrant of today. In the former there is a greater sense of community involvement and a greater belief that the system can be altered so as to be more satisfactory. Though there is conflict it appears

to be the kind which is predicated on the assumption that [illegible] is possible. The groups exist but there are links [illegible] them and thus the system is more open to communication and more responsive to change. And there are institutional forms of substance in the community which provide a foundation for analagous associations. Despite the fact that the non-Portuguese might see the Perryporter as more discontent than his fellow in Texton the former actually appears to have a greater sense of involvement with and concern for the town of which he is a part. He wants it to change, ~~and~~ he believes he can make it change, and that it will want to, and so he stays.

Texton, on the other hand, has isolated its people--occupationally, geographically, and socially. Faced with a far more negative ethnic stereotype the Texton immigrant emphasizes the individualized strategies--self improvement, flight, or something strongly akin to Banfield's amoral familism. The difference may be indicated by the responses to the question, "Do you think life would be better, say, in Canada?" (All of the informants had friends or kin there.) 39 out of 53 Texton informants said Yes and 16 indicated that they thought they might or definitely would emigrate there. Of the 37 Perryport immigrants queried, 9 said life would be better but only 1 indicated that he planned to emigrate.

As yet I have not been able to explore the attitudes of the host community in any systematic fashion but there are some intriguing, programmatic points which may be stated briefly. The attitudes of the host community will be determined by

1. The format of immigration (e.g., gradual vs. sharp increase);
2. The occupations filled and the economic niche occupied (sometimes to be too successful is worse than not being successful enough--some people are hostile because of the financial success achieved by the immigrants, ~~and witness~~ cf the plight of the Ugandan Asians);
3. The degree of social visibility maintained by the immigrants;
4. The degree of 'fit' between the aspirations of the immigrants and the current climate of opinion (e.g., ethnic self-consciousness is encouraged today, as it was not 100 years ago, and thus attempts by 'a foreigner' to alter the system are reacted to much more favorably than they would have been in 1870).

In conclusion, one may see sharp differences in the type of acculturative stresses, the type of acculturative patterns adopted, the strategies opted for to maximize the particular type of 'success' encouraged in a given milieu, and the degree of integratedness felt to be achieved. That, of course, is all this paper attempted to demonstrate--that there <u>are</u> differences which exist which are as critical to an analysis as are the generalized structural elements. Such factors offer some insight as to influences on immigration patterns; why some cities are integrated and others atomistic (why, during the 1960s, for example, did some cities experience racial

racial strife while others and, most peculiarly, some which were predicted to have 'highly explosive potential' did not?); where the greatest stress will be for new arrivals (especially if one can determine the critical aspects of their expectations and aspirations). Finally, the use of this particularistic historical approach will provide markers for determining what might be some of the structural similarities which do exist despite historical differences.

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